

1 big thing: Virus threatens food programs

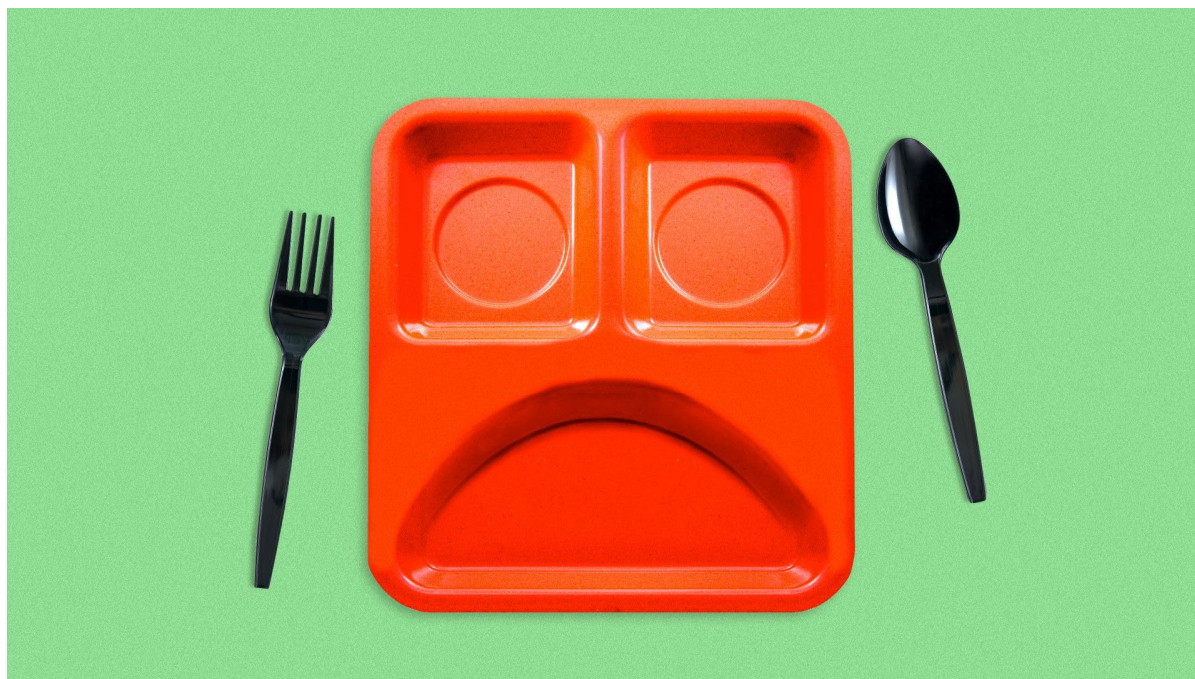


Illustration: Aida Amer/Axios

Kids will already suffer this fall if they can't return to classrooms, and for millions of them it also threatens their access to nutritious food.

- **Why it matters:** School is not just a place for learning; it's also a place where children get fed. Millions of children who don't go to school on any given day risk going hungry at home, Axios' Felix Salmon reports.

The big picture: 13.9 million children are suffering from food insecurity, up from 2.5 million in 2018 and 5.1 million at the height of the Great Recession in 2008, according to Lauren Bauer of the Hamilton Project, who used data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

- **"About 3 in 10 Black households** with children and 1 in 4 Hispanic households with children did not have sufficient food due to a lack of resources in June," she writes.

Between the lines: School districts rushed to create temporary food solutions for kids when they closed this spring.

- But many of those districts now face budget crunches and other issues — and kids are bound to fall through the cracks.

Among the broad consequences in terms of academic performance, food-insecure children are more likely to have to repeat a grade and have lower test scores than their food-secure counterparts.

- **A Canadian study** found that "child hunger is a significant and independent predictor of youth dropping out of high school, even when multiple effects within the poverty pathway are considered."

The bottom line: The effects of childhood hunger last beyond graduation and well into the workforce.

- **What's next:** Former VP Joe Biden called on President Trump and Congress to pass a \$30 billion emergency package for public schools.